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ABSTRACT

Project SCALE (Satellite Centers for Adult Leadership), an innovative model for literacy instruction, was designed to serve Limited English Proficient (LEP) adults in the San Antonio (Texas) area. The project has received a Family English Literacy grant to replicate and improve this literacy instruction model with LEP adults in rural and urban settings. Project SCALE incorporates traditional literacy education methods, including classroom instruction and commercially available texts, with supplemented materials such as televised lessons and oral communication activities. Non-traditional methods are used to overcome the problems of limited participation in educational programs, low literacy or non-literacy, lack of input and irrelevant materials. The objectives of the program include the development of language skills by students and parent leadership training. Coordination with other agencies has been established, and goals for teacher training have been established. (A figure is included.) (RS)

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Effective Literacy Instruction Model Designed by IDRA Works in Rural and Urban Districts as Project SCALE

Liz Garza

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Effective literacy instruction model designed by IDRA

by Liz Garza, Director
Family English Literacy Project

In 1985, when Family English Literacy Projects were initiated by the Department of Education, Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) was one of four entities nationwide to receive a three-year grant under the new initiative.

During this three year period which ended September 30, 1988, IDRA Family English Literacy Project (FELP) staff developed an innovative model for literacy instruction. The model was identified as Project SCALE: Satellite Centers for Adult Leadership. It was designed to serve limited English proficient (LEP) adults and was utilized in five school districts in the San Antonio area. These districts include the Northside Independent School District, the Edgewood Independent School District, the Harlandale Independent school District, South San Antonio Independent School District, and the Pearsall Independent School District.

Currently, the project is recruiting parents and setting up satellite centers at each of the school district sites to begin classes this month.

On August 1, 1988, IDRA was awarded a new three-year Family English Literacy grant to replicate and improve this effective literacy instruction model with LEP adults in rural elementary and urban school settings. The rural elementary sites include the Southside Independent School District and the Somerset Independent School District. The Harlandale Independent School District and the Northeast Independent School District will provide the middle school settings. It is anticipated that over the three year grant period, this model will improve the English language skills of 300 parents of LEP children in the four San Antonio Area school districts and improve their parent-child interactions through parent leadership training.

Limited English proficient adults, like LEP children, face many obstacles in participating successfully in an educational program because of their low socioeconomic status and their inability to communicate in the English language. This project is designed to assist parents in overcoming those obstacles through the implementation of an effective model for literacy instruction, a lesson process designed to address their unique needs, the identification of coordinating entities to strengthen program impact, and a training component to develop in teachers a repertoire of skills for working with LEP adult students.

Figure One shows the key components of IDRA's Project SCALE and how they serve to assist parents in improving their English skills in an effort to facilitate the educational attainment of LEP children.

Effective Model of Instruction - This model is unique because it incorporates both traditional as well as non-traditional methods in the delivery of literacy services. Traditional methods include weekly classroom instruction and commercially available adult education texts and series.

Non-traditional methods were identified to overcome problems of limited participation in educational programs, low level or non-literacy, lack of input, and irrelevant materials. Potential participants are recruited through their children. Announcements in English and Spanish are distributed to all children in the identified school districts enrolled in local, state and federal bilingual education programs. Teachers encourage older students to read the announcement to their parents and discuss it with younger children to encourage them to tell their parents about the classes. Sites for the satellite center where classes will be held are selected in conjunction with school district personnel to ensure accessibility by the target population. Satellite centers include school buildings as well as neighborhood church facilities, public libraries or other community buildings.

Classroom instruction is enhanced by supplemental materials including televised lessons and oral communica-

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works in rural and urban districts as Project SCALE

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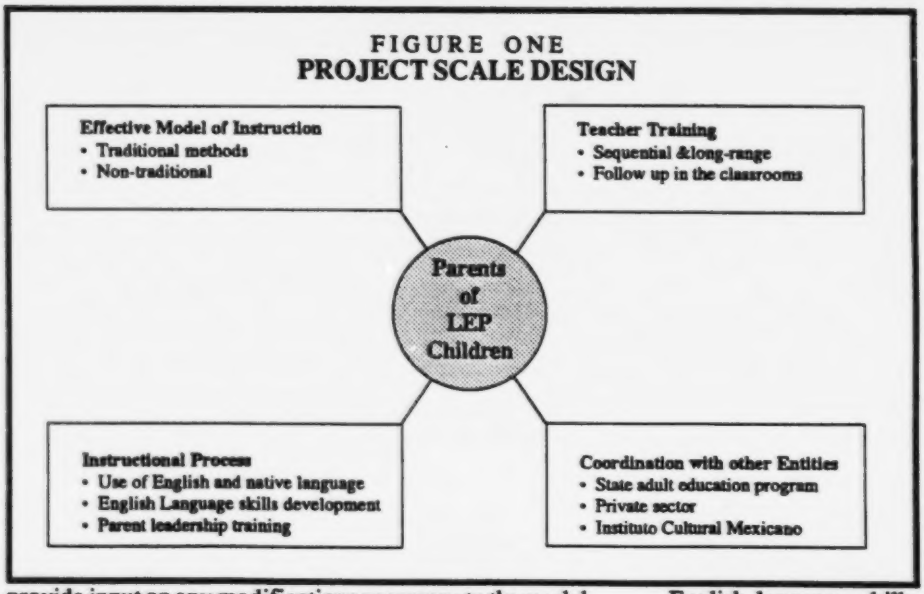
tion activities for low or non-literate students. In addition to enhancing language skills, the televised lessons provide information on parent leadership themes (parent conferences, grade cards, test issues, school curriculum, etc.).

Finally, this effective model also provides for increased parent participation by providing a vehicle for program input by participants - the Curriculum Evaluation Committee (CEC). The Curriculum Evaluation Committee is comprised of a parent from each school district, a school district staff member, and project personnel. The purpose of the CEC is to provide a forum for project participants that allows them to provide input on curriculum materials, parent leadership topics, satellite center sites, language skills, etc. Equally important the CEC will provide input on any modifications necessary to the model as it is replicated in the rural elementary settings and the urban middle school settings.

FIGURE ONE
PROJECT SCALE DESIGN



Student Instructional Process - All participants will be pre-tested with the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) distributed by CTB/McGraw Hill which yields grade level equivalents in reading, language and mathematics. Pre-test results will be used to identify appropriate programs of instruction and post-test results will be used to determine participant's language progress in the project. Participants will also be required to complete a project profile form that includes participants formal education history in both the United States and Mexico.

Based on the results of the TABE and the participant's profile form which includes information/educational history on participants, two general programs of instruction will be followed. Those participants who score below the third grade level on the TABE and who do not read and write in their native language will receive literacy instruction in Spanish and oral language development in English. Spanish literacy instruction will be discontinued once the participant can demonstrate knowledge of basic grammar concepts. Spanish literacy materials developed in Mexico will be used. The city of San Antonio is fortunate to have the Instituto Cultural Mexicano located in its downtown area. The Instituto has agreed to provide at no cost adult Spanish literacy materials for use in this project. Parent leadership training as well as follow-up activities for the televised lessons will also be conducted bilingually.,

Those participants who score above the third grade level on the TABE and whose educational history shows completion of a least the fourth grade in their native country will receive almost 90% of instruction in the development of English language skills. Spanish will be used only to clarify information and directions when needed. Parent leadership training as well as follow up activities for the televised lesson will be conducted using an ESL approach.

The student objectives for the instructional process will include the development of language skills through parent leadership themes. The language skills have been identified from the list of essential elements for language arts at the elementary level. The essential elements are

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minimum skills identified for each grade level of the statewide curriculum sequence. The selected language skills are representative of the four basic communications skills - listening, speaking, reading, writing. Parent leadership themes have been identified through surveys conducted with parents through previous Title VII Parent Institutes. Also, this list will be verified by the Curriculum Evaluation Committee. The objectives will be presented and reinforced through the use of televised lessons, basic texts. and supplementary instructional materials.

Each two hour class period is also designed to include language development and parent leadership training. One hour and fifteen minutes is used for language instruction and forty-five minutes for parent leadership training. A method of effective teaching is used in the presentation of instruction. This method was developed by Madeline Hunter based on her research on mastery learning. The key steps in the lesson cycle are:

- anticipatory set - focusing the learner's attention on the lesson objectives;
- instructional input - presenting new information to learner by modeling, using critical attributes, demonstration, examples, etc.;
- independent practice - allowing learner to apply the new information without instructor guidance;
- closure - a review of the information presented that includes learner involvement.

Limited English Proficient adults, like LEP children, face many obstacles in successfully participating in an educational program because of their low socioeconomic status and their inability to communicate in the English language.

Coordination with Other Entities - Coordination with other entities serves to improve the delivery of services and to increase project impact. IDRA has identified entities in the community that could provide inkind services that would benefit program participants. These inkind services include classroom instructors, student materials, and television production assistance. IDRA collaborated with these entities during the development of the proposal and they have agreed to support this project if it is selected for funding.

The Region XX Adult Education Cooperative will assist by providing classroom instructors and basic student materials for English language skills development. Student materials for Spanish literacy development will be provided by the Instituto Cultural Mexicano. Rogers Cable TV will continue to provide assistance through their public access program. Their assistance includes use of the studio and professional and technical staff.

Teacher Training - This training will seek to develop in teachers a repertoire of skills for working with adult LEP students. The training would address the development of knowledge, attitudes and skills. It would be sequential, long range and include follow-up in the classroom. Objectives for participants include:

a. become familiar with the project requirements and processes involved in developing English language skills to adult LEP's.
b. obtain updated information about the content of be learned and taught, the sequence to follow and effective teaching practices for developing skills.
c. recognize the need to modify instruction to meet the needs of LEP Hispanic adults through use of ESL techniques, use of native language and culturally appropriate materials.
d. plan for their classroom to insure integration of these new teaching skills.

This training targets both theory and practice. Teachers are not left alone to try to bridge the gap between theory and practice. This project goes a step further to facilitate the translation made from the training room to their individual classroom situation. It does so by providing in classroom assistance and follow-up and by bringing learning materials form the I.D.R.A. resource lending library into their classroom. These materials greatly enhance what teachers and parents learn in the classroom. They can see, first hand, learning materials that are appropriate for the adult LEP population, and materials that address specific linguistic needs and at the same time are culturally appropriate.

Currently, Project SCALE is recruiting parents and setting up satellite centers at each of the school district sites to begin classes this month. If you would like more information on the project, contact Liz Garza, Project Director at (512) 684-8180. ◊